DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 432 875 EC 307 364

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TITLE	Beyond Demographics: Strategic Responses to a Changing Workforce. National Summit of the Institute for Community Inclusion's Center for Promoting Employment (RRTC) and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (March 3-4, 1998).
INSTITUTION	Children's Hospital, Boston, MA. Inst. for Community Inclusion.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (ED/OSERS), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1999-06-00
NOTE	29p.
CONTRACT	H133B30067
AVAILABLE FROM	Institute for Community Inclusion, Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Ave., Boston, MA 02115; Tel: 617-355-6506; Tel: 617-355-6956 (TTY); Fax: 617-355-7940; e-mail: ici@a1.tch.harvard.edu; Web site: http://www.childrenshospital.org/ici ($10).
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Proceedings (021)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adults; Business Responsibility; *Change Strategies; Corporate Support; *Disabilities; Employer Attitudes; Employer Employee Relationship; *Employment; Employment Services; *Partnerships in Education; *Private Sector; *Shared Resources and Services; Small Businesses; Work Environment
IDENTIFIERS	*Reasonable Accommodation (Disabilities)

ABSTRACT

This report discusses recommendations from a national summit that met to address the need for employers to consider the implications of the changing characteristics of the American workforce, to examine alternative approaches for fully engaging members of populations who are new or returning to the workforce, to identify innovative approaches that maximize the contributions of different populations to organizational effectiveness, and to develop strategies that could be implemented by the public and private sectors which would enhance the employment of people with disabilities. Recommendations include: (1) developing employer-to-employer partnerships to provide private job support, creating a small business development and support center, and developing a national mentorship program; (2) garnering partnerships between public and not-for-profit sectors to provide shared health care coverage, business incubator projects, employer support services, school/training partnerships, and welfare to work programs; (3) developing partnerships between public resources and agencies to develop one-stop career and employment support centers, and wraparound service and supports. An appendix includes a list of summit participants and profiles of five companies that have implemented programs to employ and accommodate individuals with disabilities. (Contains 13 references.) (CR)

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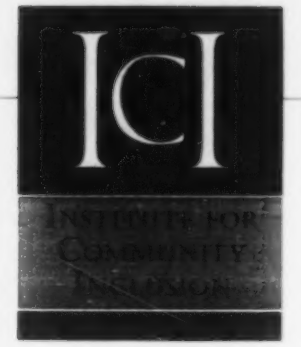

Beyond Demographics: Strategic Responses to a Changing Workforce

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June 1999

Beyond Demographics:
Strategic Responses to the Changing Workforce

A Project of:

Institute for Community Inclusion/UAP,
Center on State Systems and Employment (RRTC)

in collaboration with

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&
The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

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Acknowledgements

The authors wish to acknowledge the guiding and supportive role of Dr. Kate Seelman, Director of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), Delores Watkins, Project Officer for NIDRR, John Lancaster, Executive Director of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, and Randee Chafkin, Program Manager of the President's Committee in the development of this Summit as well as for their ongoing support of the efforts to enhance the employment of persons with disabilities. We are grateful to Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes, Judi Casey, and Brad Googins of the Center for Work and Family, and the many employers who contributed their time, effort, and strategies to this report. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the significant editorial and design supports of David Temelini of the Institute and our consultant editor Naomi Chedd.

This is a publication of the Institute for Community Inclusion which is funded, in part, by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research of the US Department of Education under grant #H133B30067. The opinions contained in this publication are those of the grantee and do not necessarily reflect those of the US Department of Education.

Citation

The recommended citation for this report is: Kiernan, W.E., Marrone, J., Butterworth, J., (1999) *Beyond Demographics: Strategic Responses to a Changing Workforce.* Boston: Institute for Community Inclusion/UAP, Children's Hospital.

Additional copies of this report may be obtained for $10.00 per copy (postage and handling included). Direct orders to: Publications Office, Institute for Community Inclusion, Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Ave., Boston, MA 02115. Please make checks payable to Children's Hospital.

Collaborators

The Institute for Community Inclusion/UAP is an organization which advocates for the right of all people with disabilities to be full participants in mainstream society. In addition to directly assisting people with disabilities and their families, ICI conducts training, technical assistance, and research activities. ICI is also involved in special projects focused on ensuring personal choice, self-determination, and social and economic justice for people with disabilities.

The Center for Work and Family at Boston College is a research organization devoted to the study of work and home-life issues. Through research, demonstration projects, corporate partnerships and policy analysis, the Center works to promote corporate and community responsiveness to families.

The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is a federal agency based in Washington, D.C. The Committee's mission is to communicate, coordinate, and promote public and private efforts to enhance the employment of people with disabilities.

This publication will be made available in alternate formats upon request.

Table of Contents

A Shared Challenge 7

Some Trends in Employment 9

- Cultural Diversity 9
- Working Women 9
- An Aging Workforce 9
- Balancing Work and Life 10
- Work and Disability 10

How Employers Have Responded 10

Looking Toward the Future 11

- Shared principles 11
- Approaches utilized 11
- Strategies for the future 13

Partnerships: A Key to Success 13

- Private/Private 13
- Private/Public 14
- Public/Public 14

The Challenge of Change: Enhancing Employment for People with Disabilities 15

Solutions for Change 16

- Private/Private 16
- Private/Public 17
- Public/Public 18

A Vision for the Future 19

References 21

Appendix A (Summit Participants) 23

Appendix B (Unique Employer Strategies) 25

- IBM 27
- Stride Rite/Lahey Clinic 29
- Eli Lilly 31
- Marriott 33
- UNUM 35

A Shared Challenge

In the current climate of strong economic growth and prosperity, there is a growing need for employers to pay closer attention to changing workforce demographics. The engine that will fuel continued economic growth is closely tied to the nature and level of skills brought to the workplace by the current and emerging workforce.

In order to address these changes and the need to develop strategic options for employers, employees and the public sector, the Institute for Community Inclusion's Center for Promoting Employment (RRTC) and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities convened a national summit on March 3 and 4, 1998. Employers, policy makers and disability advocates attended the summit ***Beyond Demographics: Strategic Responses to the Changing Workforce*** in order to:

- consider the implications of the changing characteristics of the American workforce,
- examine alternative approaches for fully engaging members of populations or groups who are new or returning to the workforce,
- identify innovative approaches that maximize the contributions which members of specific populations or groups can make to organizational effectiveness, and
- develop strategies that could be implemented by the public and private sectors which would enhance the employment of people with disabilities.

Participants were invited based on their past commitment to addressing the needs of employers and the changing workforce, people with disabilities seeking employment and policy makers interested in expanding the linkage among employers, public agencies and individuals seeking employment. *(See Appendix A for Participant List)*

National trend data on a range of worker groups served to frame the evolution of the workforce and offered a broader context within which to consider future directions. Several exemplary strategies supporting both employer and employee needs were presented by leaders in the field of Work and Family. *(See Appendix B)*. Finally, participants held active discussions outlining strategies that could build upon past accomplishments, identify new partnerships and offer potential approaches to expanding employment opportunities to an ever changing workforce.

Some Trends in Employment

The American workforce has evolved rapidly and dramatically over the past two decades. Today's workforce is more diverse in both culture and gender, more varied in age, more inclusive of multiple roles of family members and more flexible for workers who require special accommodations.

Cultural Diversity

From 1980 to 1990, racial and ethnic groups contributed to nearly one quarter of the growth in the workforce. This trend is likely to continue; by the year 2000, one third of the US population will belong to a racial/minority group (Garcia, 1996). In the next five years entrants who are non-white will represent about 30% of those new to the workforce (Fischer, 1995). By 2006, the ethnic minority share of the workforce is expected to be 27%, up from 20% in 1986 (Fullerton, 1997).

Working Women

In 1997, studies indicated that 60% of women worked outside the home (Judy & D'Amico, 1997). The number of women between the ages of 20 and 40 years was even greater, reaching 70% (Fischer, 1995). It is estimated that the percentage of women in the overall labor force will increase from 46% in 1994 to about 50% in 2020 (Judy & D'Amico, 1997). In addition to obtaining entry level positions, women are moving into managerial positions in much greater numbers; in 1995, 43% of all managerial positions were held by women (Saltzman, 1996). Probably the most significant change involving women in the workplace is the increase in the number of young mothers at work. In 1960, only 18.6% of married women with children under six years of age worked outside the home; in 1997, that figure dramatically increased to 64% (Judy & D'Amico, 1997).

An Aging Workforce

It is estimated that nearly one fifth of the workforce will be over age 65 in 2020 (Judy & D'Amico, 1997). Increases in education level and reductions of Social Security benefits will result in more older Americans working in the coming decades (Judy & D'Amico, 1997). In the year 2005, it is anticipated that 70% of men and 56% of women aged 55 to 64 will remain in the workforce (Fullerton, 1997). Furthermore, the number of people age 55 and over in the labor force is projected to increase 44% between 1996 and 2006, while the projected growth in the overall labor force will be only .8%. Finally, the rate of job change in the older workforce is less than 3%, while those between the ages of 25 and 34 change jobs at four times that rate (Fisher, 1996).

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Balancing Work and Life

During the past three decades there has been a significant shift in the work/life priorities. In 1960, 43% of all families were single earner families. In 1991, this number dropped to 14% (Googins, 1991). But change has not come easily. A 1994 Gallup poll reported that workers would be willing to accept lower salaries in exchange for reduced working hours. The demands on the workforce are not just emanating from the workplace but from changing family needs and obligations and increased life expectancy. One survey of more than 1,400 employees aged 30 or older reported that 20% were providing care to elder relatives or friends. Eight percent of those responding indicated that they spend 35 hours a week caring for an elder person (Opportunity 2000, 1988).

Work and Disability

People with disabilities are emerging as a significant, yet untapped labor resource. While estimates vary considerably (from 3% to 38%), reports note that more than 48 million Americans have a disability (Kiernan, Butterworth & Gilmore 1998), and about half of those have a severe disability. On average, seven out of ten people with disabilities are not working, with most considered not able to work by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Kiernan & Schalock, 1997; Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, 1998). High rates of unemployment have also been reported through other national employment studies of people with disabilities (McGaughey, Kiernan, McNally, Gilmore & Keith, 1994; NCD, 1995).

How Employers Have Responded

Some employers have developed exemplary practices in response to the changing workforce. Many of these practices, which are in concert with employer needs and company focus, were initiated as part of a company diversity strategy. Several have also developed strategies that will create a more welcoming and supportive workplace for future employees. Others have developed outreach efforts to recruit promising candidates from diverse cultures at a more senior level as well as support entry level employees. It is these employers whose success stories will teach, inspire and pave the way for others. (See Appendix B for detailed corporate strategies).

Some common themes have emerged:

- Successful diversity strategies are linked to business objectives.
- Specific components of diversity policies and programs should reflect an awareness that most workforce sub-groups are heterogeneous.
- Policies and programs designed for one employee group can often be adapted for another.

- Supervisors and co-workers may benefit from supports that promote inclusive workplaces.
- Despite good intentions, special supports targeted for particular population groups may be stigmatizing.
- When diversity programs are being planned, decision-makers should attempt to anticipate future variations in economic cycles.
- Innovative diversity strategies can result from partnerships with other business units.
- Innovative diversity strategies can result from collaborations between companies and community organizations.
- Outcomes resulting from successful diversity strategies go beyond just "getting in the door."

Looking Toward the Future

The following approaches may help increase employment opportunities for the evolving workforce and particularly for individuals with disabilities. Shared principles among employers, approaches utilized by industry, general strategies for the future and specific ways to enhance employment of individuals with disabilities are outlined.

Shared principles

For industry to grow, there must be a viable labor pool. The workforce is evolving, and the skills, interests and abilities of the emerging workforce are varied. With increasing demand for workers, a coordinated approach among all stakeholders is essential in order to create greater economic independence for all individuals and encourage the participation of potential workers in programs and services that can enhance (re)entry to work.

Employers are interested in providing goods or services that meet market needs, offer a return on investment and enhance the profitability of the company. Successful strategies for responding to changing workforce demographics must:

- fit the mission of the company
- reflect company needs
- have active endorsement and support of senior management, and
- develop relationships and partnerships with all stakeholders.

Approaches Utilized

These approaches, which reflect both differences in need and industry perspective, can be divided into two major clusters: (1) preparing the work setting, which includes strategies for developing a more supportive and employee-responsive workplace and (2) supporting the worker, which addresses the broader needs outside the workplace. All strategies reflect a top down commitment and a bottom up investment.

1. Preparing the work setting:

- target groups within the company to better understand and support the needs of selected clusters of workers (affinity groups, task forces)
- set up focus groups (involving both employees and individuals outside of the company) to assist in the development of effective intervention strategies directed at addressing specific group needs.
- use experiential exercises to increase awareness of selected groups of workers (disability awareness, celebration of cultural events and holidays),
- provide orientation meetings and instructional activities addressing diversity and cultural concerns.
- integrate diversity and disability issues into current employee orientation activities and staff trainings for all employees, including senior managers.
- develop support strategies, jointly sponsored by the employer and community agencies or organizations (cultural celebrations, religious festivals, community fund raising social activities).

2. Supporting workers

- provide case management services addressing individual employee needs outside the workplace (mental health counseling, family supports, health care).
- develop specific services to support family needs (child care, apartment location, transportation).
- develop career counseling services (jointly sponsored by the company and a community resources-career placement service) addressing work and non-work related issues and needs.
- identify industry mentors for college students who can be recruited into the industry upon graduation.
- develop job sharing strategies for workers offering greater flexibility to selected groups of employees (parents, people with disabilities, older workers).

In addition to the general investment, an individual or small groups of employees can serve as the driving force for the strategy. These "champions" can be employees who have a personal commitment and are willing to assume the additional responsibility in making sure that the company investment in a specific strategy is maintained.

Beyond the visible commitment of the company, employers can develop mechanisms for documenting impact and recognizing accomplishments. For example, they can track and report actual return on investment figures, institute employee rewards and recognition programs and build pubic relations activities around their efforts. The success of any strategy should reflect the level of commitment of the company, the identification of "champions," and the development of a recognition or feedback mechanism.

Strategies for the future

In order for a company to develop effective strategies, it must recognize a need, identify potential approaches and recruit key internal and external stakeholders who can respond to the need and invest in the strategy. Partnerships in which there is a shared sense of need and a common, desired outcome are most likely to lead to long term and sustainable systemic change.

Partnerships: A Key to Success

The development of partnerships offers an opportunity for creating tremendous impact, since they can involve both large and small employers and a range of public and not-for-profit entities. Partnerships can take on different configurations, including private/private, public/private and public/public. However, the approaches noted can be effective for more than one type of partnership. Here are some strategies that may emerge through three types of partnerships.

1. Private/Private

Employer-to-employer partnerships reflect a growing interest in joining together to identify solutions to the demands of the changing workforce. While preserving individual identity and maintaining profitability for each of the industries involved, they can address some areas of shared interest, such as recruitment, retention and advancement of the current and future workforce. Some approaches include establishing:

- small business support services (shared employee supports in child care, transportation, employee assistance services, diversity and targeted employee recruitment) sponsored by a consortium of companies,
- joint economic development activities (combined planning for shared infrastructure and capital expenditures across industries, development of transportation systems for employees, flexible work hours and job duties),
- executive and senior staff support groups (regular meetings of managers and executives to address shared concerns and challenges in workforce development),
- shared staff and personnel resources in areas such as information systems, overhead and operations (maintenance, heat, security),
- shared planning (development of local area planning approaches involving employers and community leaders) addressing a wide range of employer identified topics, and/or
- linkage with professional organizations (development of formal affiliations with professional organizations for recruitment and retention of employees in selected occupational areas)

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2. Private/Public

This partnership brings together the employer with public and not-for- profit sectors to develop strategies that will support the shared missions of each. Strategies include:

- development of small business support services (targeted services for small employers directed at enhancing opportunities for selected groups of potential workers)
- economic development, collaborative planning and implementation (shared design of economic development strategies where public and private resources (fiscal and personnel) are used to develop a plan for local community job growth)
- school-to-work collaborative projects (involvement of employers in training and curriculum reform at local schools so the needs of industry are included in school competency training; mentoring relationships within the local schools; paid internships in industry)
- new business development and hiring of individuals from target groups (use of economic development resources to stimulate growth and create new jobs for target groups; incentives from the public sector in supporting new employees; companies serving as small business incubators supporting start up companies owned by targeted workforce sectors)
- flexible resources for employers (provision of resources so that employers can hire and support workers; jointly sponsored employee supports such as child care, transportation and case management services)
- development of long term strategies for recruiting and retaining new employees (outreach to cultural and community groups through employee volunteer efforts; participation on local economic development and planning councils; mentoring)

3. Public/Public

These partnerships call for collaboration between public resources and agencies. Recent interests in the development of single points of entry and one-stop services have reinforced interests in streamlining public services. Developing a system of public supports that encourages streamlined and stakeholder-focused efforts has been the subject of legislation and administrative changes at the national, state and local levels. ***Strategies include:***

- coordinating efforts leading to greater economic growth and developing shared funding (developing a single point of access and entry to employment related services; consolidating case management and support resources; developing wraparound approaches to individual supports; streamlining the application and documentation processes across agencies and programs),
- establishing government and not-for-profits as employers of target groups of individuals (strong commitment by the pubic sector to lead the way in employing individuals with disabilities and other targeted groups; developing outreach programs to recruit and train individuals for public sector jobs that provide both economic opportunity and career growth),

- developing public policies and practices that focus on accessing employment for people with disabilities and other targeted groups (modify policies and practices to direct all supports to individuals with disabilities and others who are viewed as hard to employ for obtaining jobs; modifying cash disincentives and providing health and personal assistance supports for individuals who enter employment; streamlining application processes to emphasize reduction in dependence on public supports through employment earnings)
- coordinating employment services for all job seekers (developing a single point of access to employment for all people; integrating personal needs and family supports for individuals entering employment; developing coordinated services that respond to the needs of both employer and employee)

The Challenge of Change: Enhancing Employment for People with Disabilities

Although much has been written about the need for involving employers in the rehabilitation process, many previously tried approaches have reflected the needs of the human service system rather than the shared needs of the employer, potential employee and support resources (Brooke, Green, Kregel, Barcus, Selvy, Wehman & Sedillo, 1998). In order for all participants to succeed, all must benefit. For employers, the needs are often hiring and retaining workers. For people with disabilities, the need is finding a job that provides a good wage and security. For society, the needs are utilizing its resources and the existing workforce, wisely and effectively.

Medical security, skill acquisition, transportation and social support are often cited by people with disabilities as major needs when considering work (Kiernan & Schalock, 1997). However, there has been poor coordination across the support systems addressing work, community living, health care and recreation; the needs of the whole person have seldom been addressed in a comprehensive fashion. In addition, the current service system provides conflicting messages: in order to get some level of fiscal supports and health care coverage, people must be deemed unable to work. Past approaches to skill training have been limited for people with disabilities, with little documentation that pre-training leads to more effective employment outcomes. Employers continue to be both apprehensive about the skills and abilities of persons with disabilities and concerned about issues that might surface in the work setting, from coworker reactions to necessary accommodations to increased liability and litigation.

Solutions for Change

The following suggestions are grouped using the partnership clusters presented previously:

1. Private/Private

1. Private job support: Many employers offer benefits to employees, which include training and tuition assistance. For many years, banks have offered low interest loans for students. The Community Reinvestment Act has brought banks into the arena of supporting community development and other community based efforts. The combined interests of companies in increasing employee skills, and banks in supporting community development, could lead the way to training and supporting people with disabilities in work settings.

When there is a need for on-site or other supports, banks or businesses might consider making available already designated resources for personnel and community development to create an interest-free or low-interest personal supports or personal assistance loan fund. The use of Social Security Work Incentives could enable workers to set aside earnings and pay off the loan while remaining at work. Such a strategy would enhance the ability of workers to become or remain employed.

2. Small Business Development and Support Center: Many industries that have expertise in supporting the growth of product and service lines are invested in supporting community activities. Establishing a Small Business Development and Support Center would respond to larger employers who may need goods or services that could be provided by an external company.

The availability of entrepreneurial opportunities for people with disabilities may be fostered by this effort. Such a center could be developed by a consortium of businesses and could address business needs (transportation, production, maintenance, technical supports, child care, etc.) as well as expand the array of local community businesses. Loaning executives or other staff to the center could bring in the expertise needed to promote economic development and create job opportunities for people with and without disabilities. Small businesses may be run by an individual with a disability or provide jobs for individuals with disabilities.

3. National Mentorship Program: Mentoring promising students is a well-recognized strategy for recruitment that has many positive features. While requiring an investment of personnel and time, the payoff is often significant. Expanding the concept of mentorship beyond schools to include continuing education or work training programs (community rehabilitation programs, welfare training programs) may allow employers to influence the training curriculum, implement a more comprehensive screening and job matching strategy and recruit at all job levels.

2. Private/Public

*1. **Shared health care coverage:*** The most frequently noted barrier to employment for people with disabilities is the loss of health care coverage. Employers also have concerns about hiring individuals who have major health care needs and their impact on health care costs. A shared health care coverage strategy would recognize the potential for higher costs in some cases and create a publicly funded reimbursement pool that would be available to employers. The fund would cover health care for people with disabilities when it exceeded the average health care costs for the typical company employee.

*2. **Business incubator projects:*** For some individuals with disabilities, small business development is an option that should be explored. By providing actual fiscal and technical supports to emerging businesses, industry can serve as a shelter for small business development. Projects could be started within a company, then shifted out of the company when they were mature enough. In other instances, small businesses could be funded initially through public resources, with employers adopting the business and providing technical assistance in the start up and initial operations phase.

*3. **Employer supports services:*** Employers often say they don't know where to find qualified job applicants. The typical job service, while having the majority of job announcements, does not serve people with disabilities. The local vocational rehabilitation and human services agencies, while having some contacts, are sometimes unknown to employers and are less likely to be contacted. This service would be a joint employer and human service resource, linking job listings, employer queries and job needs with programs providing services to people with disabilities.

Such a service must support employers' and potential employees' needs. It could be advertised to employers and would provide rapid response and follow-up. It could also include consultation and advice to people with disabilities and provide limited case management and technical assistance to employers as well as employer-to-employer linkage. A joint board of employers and human service workers could serve as an advisory group.

*4. **School/training partnerships:*** Employers have a significant stake in the development of the youth workforce. School-to-work partnerships in which schools and employers work together to create employment experiences have been successful. Such partnerships now need to address curriculum modifications, making classroom learning more relevant to the workplace. Influencing curriculum, implementing faculty and employee teaching, setting up classrooms at industry sites, and using educators to support employees in developing academic skills as job duties change are ways to enhance this partnership. These partnerships must be mutually beneficial, address both shared and individual needs and reflect a commitment at all levels.

5. Welfare to Work: The emerging workforce requires different supports and assistance from both private and public sectors. Job skill training without recognition of housing, transportation and child care needs does not work. Poorly paying and non-benefited employment offers little incentive to work. So jobs must serve as the gateway to financial independence and community participation. Employers are now considering a range of services, including child and older parent supports, a menu-driven benefits program, innovative transportation systems and flexibility in working hours.

Welfare recipients present similar needs, however, it is often necessary to implement other individual and family supports. Training in daily organizational skills, child development supports, financial management, and social networking are essential if welfare recipients are to enter the workforce successfully. Estimates note that at least one third of current welfare recipients are individuals with a disability or who have a family member with a disability.

Case management services can address some of the needs. Partnerships between human service agencies and industry, where shared case management and integrated support systems are developed, can offer a strong incentive for welfare recipients who have a disability to return or enter the workforce. Jointly-funded, company- or collaboratively-run initiatives (some child care programs, for example), are options for supporting this emerging workforce.

3. Public/Public

1. One stop career and employment support centers: Concerns about duplicating employment and training efforts has been highlighted over the past two years, with several legislative attempts to create one-stop career center systems. These career centers must serve all job seekers, including people with disabilities, and have an ongoing relationship with a wide range of employers. The challenge of any one-stop system is providing equal access and adequate capacity to respond to all job seekers.

Models in which different employment services coexist have shown some promise, however, this strategy encourages parallel operations: one for people with disabilities and one for people without disabilities. Developing technical assistance and a support system for one-stop career center employees offering backup supports and consultation for unique needs may be a more effective strategy. Failing to serve all individuals is a real concern and must be dealt with at both the administrative and service level. Training and technical supports can expand the capacity of a one stop system while clear administrative directives can reinforce the expectation that ALL are to be served.

2. Wraparound services and supports: Traditionally, supports and services for people with disabilities have focused on enhancing one life area rather than on integrating supports across

major life areas (community living, employment , recreation and health). Flexible funding and comprehensive allocation of fiscal and other supports for persons with disabilities (like some projects funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) can begin to address needs in health, personal, family and child care as well as fostering community membership.

Developing integrated eligibility determination processes, coordinated case management services and agreed upon outcomes will lead to more comprehensive services for people with disabilities and family members. Developing coordinated funding and assistance (fiscal and personnel) directed to and by the individual and family may more efffectively address individual and family needs. Adopting a common set of desired outcomes (a real job with benefits and other supports), recognizing that jobs and peoples' needs will change and facilitating career growth for individuals with disabilities will contribute to an integrated system.

The challenge facing public/public partnerships at the federal, state and local levels is making fiscal and personnel resources available in a flexible way, directed by the individual or a representative of the individual, with employment as the outcome. Legislation and administrative changes will assist in the re-engineering of support systems. However, it is even more crucial to alter our expectations for people with disabilities in the workplace. Stimulating innovation is the role of the federal government; developing models for service delivery is a function of state government ; and implementing new ways of doing business is the role of all partnerships: public/public, public/private and private/private.

A Vision for the Future

In conclusion, the Summit ***Beyond Demographics: Strategic Responses to the Changing Workforce*** offers some perspectives from employers who are actively addressing the changing workforce. These employers, in concert with policy makers, researchers and advocates, have identified specific ways in which we need to re-conceptualize the national and local response to employment for all, particularly people with disabilities. The future is not in isolated approaches or singularly focused responses, but rather, in new and reformulated partnerships at all levels. It is not enough to think outside the box; we need to begin to behave outside the box. By using these suggestions, change is possible.

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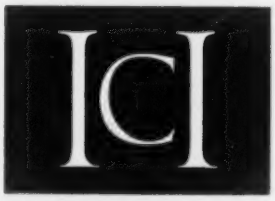

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Appendix A: Summit Participants

Summit Participants

Beyond Demographics: Strategic Responses to the Changing Workforce
March 4-5, 1998

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Appendix B: Unique Employer Strategies

Diversity: The IBM Strategy

International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) is the world's largest information services company. IBM creates, develops and manufactures advanced information technologies, including computer systems, software, networking systems, storage devices and microelectronics. As a leader in its field, IBM is committed to practices and policies that encourage workforce diversity. Initiatives at IBM include developing diversity councils and task forces, making workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities, implementing training programs for managers and providing financial support for community projects. IBM has made a concerted effort to make inclusion an integral part of its corporate culture. Attracting and retaining the most talented and motivated employees and understanding its marketplace are the driving forces behind IBM's strategy.

The first employee with a disability joined IBM in 1914, and the company's first written statement of equal opportunity was published in 1953. In 1967, IBM created an equal opportunity department to establish guidelines for fulfilling company policy. Today workforce diversity is administered at every IBM location. It has expanded to include: race, color, gender, national origin, culture, lifestyle, age, disability, sexual orientation, Vietnam-era veteran status, economic or marital status and religion.

IBM's diversity initiatives are responsive to the issues of employees with disabilities. For example, in 1995, IBM's chairman agreed to support eight task forces on diversity, one focusing on disabilities. These groups look at methods for improving the productivity of a particular group, initiatives within the community, and strategies that have improved the company's presence in the marketplace. An outgrowth of the task force is the Disabilities Network Group, a group not sponsored, but supported by IBM. All groups provide an opportunity for employees at various locations to share information on common issues and problems.

IBM's commitment to people with disabilities is also apparent in accommodations made at the workplace. Examples include: architectural modifications and computer adaptations for people with mobility impairments, IBM publications on audiocassettes for people with visual impairments, software and printers for Braille translations as well as sign language interpreters, captioned videotapes and telecommunications devices for people with hearing impairments. In addition, IBM develops products and technologies for all people with disabilities, not just employees. Its Atlanta center offers technological support and service for both external and internal customers who need help with adaptive equipment.

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IBM's commitment to diversity has also expanded beyond its internal stakeholders to include a community grant program. In March 1996, IBM awarded $2.5 million in grants to 12 non-profit organizations as part of its Workforce Development Technology Grant Program. The program's purpose was funding innovative uses of technology and chose organizations providing job training and assistance for unemployed/displaced workers, new immigrants, disadvantaged youth and physically challenged individuals. One example is a distance learning network in Michigan that planned to expand employment services for Michigan workers, particularly those who are physically challenged, by linking five job training centers into a single delivery service system. In addition, IBM provides purchasing and marketing opportunities to companies owned by ethnic/racial/cultural minority group members, women, and people with disabilities in all areas of its business. Project View is another initiative, which has created opportunities for college students with disabilities to meet with both staff and others in the company with disabilities as a part of a recruitment process.

IBM's efforts are consistent with its belief that a diverse organization is a basic need. Attracting and retaining talented, motivated employees as well as understanding its diverse marketplace has resulted in a company that reaps moral and financial benefits.

Sam Lloyd
Program Manager of External Programs
International Business Machines Corp. (IBM)
New York

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Work, Family and Community Partnerships: Two Employer Strategies

Stride Rite Corporation, the leading marketer for high quality children's footwear in the U.S. has long been committed to creating the supports necessary to maintain a stable workforce. Stride Rite has been recognized for establishing the first on-site corporate child care center in 1971.

When child care services were needed at its new Kentucky site, Stride Rite expanded the traditional child care center model into a work-site adult education center. This center provides the supports necessary for life-long learning, offering literacy training and courses in English as a Second Language (ESL) and budget management for first time home buyers.

Lahey Clinic is a physician-run, multi-specialty clinic serving 38 communities in Massachusetts. With 3,500 employees and 300 physicians, Lahey is ranked among the top multi-specialty clinics in the country and strives to be the:

- employer of choice
- health care provider of choice
- neighbor of choice

Lahey is involved in numerous projects that sustain work, family and community life, including a major effort to support a community-based initiative to reduce domestic violence. Currently, Lahey is training employees, medical staff and physicians to recognize the signs of domestic violence and intervene with abuse victims. They will expand this training to the community. In addition, staff have been working with teenagers in the public schools regarding such issues as date rape and assault.

Lahey is committed to hiring former welfare recipients and providing the supports necessary for job retention through coopertive community arrangements. For example, Lahey may loan their vans to community agencies in exchange for Lahey employee participation in community resources such as educational courses or child care. Currently, Lahey provides on-site ESL courses. Future plans include creating a community speakers bureau and increasing the availability of flexible work arrangements at the hospital.

Karen Leibold
Director of Work/Family/Community Partnerships
Lahey Clinic

Meeting Family Needs: An Eli Lilly Strategy

Eli Lilly and Company is a global research-based pharmaceutical corporation dedicated to creating and delivering innovative pharmaceutical health care solutions that enable people to live longer, healthier and more active lives. With its headquarters in Indianapolis, Lilly employs close to 30,000 people worldwide and markets its products in 156 countries.

Lilly has long been recognized for its exemplary work-family policies and programs. The company views each individual as a whole person and maintains this focus throughout all its strategic initiatives. In effect since January 1998, a strategic focus on workforce partnering combines work-life strategy, diversity strategy, and education. One example is a group in rural Indiana that has started diversity training in a middle school. This initiative, which is anticipated to build diversity awareness and develop skills in tomorrow's workforce, is the result of the synergy among these three priorities.

Lilly is rapidly moving beyond program implementation to strategic initiatives, expanding its efforts from an internal to an external focus in order to make a positive impact on the community as well as the company. For example, Lilly has started summer camps that benefit working parents and their children, including families outside the company. Lilly found the space, the buildings and the pool; the YMCA came in and ran the camp; and Lilly scientists developed a science curriculum for campers. This partnership proved valuable to the entire community-Lilly employees and their families, Lilly customers, other area employers, and families in the community.

The strategic paradigm that drives Lilly's initiatives has four components: strategy, program, internal, and external. Its objectives are threefold:

1. To enhance the ability of the workforce to manage the demands of the work environment. Lilly looks beyond programs to determine whether a supportive culture exists at work. Quality child care programs that meet families' needs will result in greater work productivity. On the other hand, a flextime policy will have limited impact if employees feel that they will be penalized for flexing their hours.
2. To enhance the capabilities of the workforce by using inventive methods to improve productivity. A cell biologist and a molecular biologist who job share can get more work done together than individually.

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3. To build strategic partnerships combining community and workplace objectives and building on the synergy among partners. Child care initiatives in 13 counties were developed with businesses, childcare advocates, local and government officials. Due to their success, they were expanded to 75 out of the 92 counties. In addition, a group is addressing the largest statewide involvement in work-life issues with a companion, the Guide to the Tool Kit, that provides tips to child care advocates and county teams on how to approach businesses. Collaborative projects on education issues and diversity strategies will likely grow out of the relationships forged through this initiative.

Candace Lange
Manager, Work and Family Initiatives
Eli Lilly and Company

Supporting Low Wage Workers: A Marriott Strategy

Marriott is a diversified global company with 190,000 employees that has operations in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Marriott's principal businesses are lodging and contract services-food and facilities management, and a growing number of retirement communities.

In 1996 Marriott developed an information and referral resource to meet the needs of low wage earners, who comprise more than 75% its workforce. The Associates Resource Line (ARL) is a confidential 24-hour, toll-free hotline staffed by trained social workers who speak 15 languages Research indicated that the numerous work-family benefits and programs that Marriott had offered over the past ten years were used mainly by professional staff. The ARL offers advice and referral for any life issue that may affect workers, which have included citizenship, illegal evictions, child care, substance abuse, domestic violence, financial information and transportation. The hotline may be a particularly useful resource for employees who are making the transition from welfare to work and for others who find themselves affected by changing welfare reform laws. To date, 82% of individuals using the ARL are low wage workers with a utilization rate of 8%.

One positive outcome of the ARL is that it allows managers and supervisors to reduce time spent managing employees' personal problems and to increase time spent on their jobs. Some supervisors estimated that they were spending 50% of their time on the social and emotional needs of employees and were required to use skills way beyond the realm of their job responsibilities and expertise. Now managers have a reliable resource to which they can refer employees with life problems. They can also call the ARL for consultation.

Ms. Donna Klein, Director of Work Life Programs for Marriott Corporation, reports that the ARL provides a return-on investment of 4:1. However, the benefits go beyond the money saved by higher retention rates. The ARL reflects the company's need to recruit, retain, develop and mange a diverse workforce that meets and exceeds customer expectations. The hotline reflects Marriott's commitment to their employees and their willingness to provide resources to enhance their employment . It also helps Marriott retain low wage workers in a tight labor market and contributes to the community at the same time.

In addition, Marriott has helped create a Low Wage Employer Consortium, which is composed of companies that are managing such issues as recruitment and retention of employees. Consortium meetings provide an opportunity for companies to discuss best practices and to collaborate on projects for mutual benefit.

Donna Klein
Director, Work-Life Program
Marriott Corporation

Embracing Difference: A UNUM Strategy

UNUM American (UNUM) is a subsidiary of UNUM Corporation, the world leader in disability and special risk insurance. UNUM employs approximately 3,700 employees, 2,700 in their offices and another 1,000 employees in the field. UNUM's diversity initiatives involve recognizing, valuing and embracing differences among employees and customers. Such diversity initiatives benefit both employees and their customers, in addition to making a positive contribution to the bottom line. UNUM views employees as their most valuable asset and is aware that understanding a diverse customer base provides a competitive edge in the global marketplace. As a leader in the disability insurance market, UNUM is committed to employing people with disabilities and reducing barriers that inhibit the hiring of individuals with disabilities. Recently, UNUM has been increasing their recruitment efforts by advertising in trade journals that target people with disabilities, such as the publication of the National Association for Attorneys with Disabilities.

UNUM's diversity initiatives began in response to Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Laws. They accelerated their efforts in 1994 with the inauguration of five affinity groups: people with disabilities; people of color; gays and lesbians; older workers and women. With the support of top management, each group identified three changes that would contribute to their work success and comfort. Then plans for change were implemented. The people with disabilities affinity group has been involved in building plans and has taken a leadership role in identifying and responding to safety issues.

In 1995, UNUM created a Diversity Board composed of employees charged with formulating diversity strategies until the year 2000 and beyond. One particularly creative program, "Day in the Life," offers three days of workshops and activities for increasing employees' understanding and acceptance of individual differences. Topics include visual impairment, limited mobility, living with multiple sclerosis, disability etiquette, psychiatric disabilities, and deaf culture. This event helps employees gain skills and competencies for working with colleagues from diverse backgrounds and contributes to UNUM's success in the global market, including its disability products.

UNUM believes that managing diversity is not a set of strategies, but rather a work in progress. The ultimate goal is to create an environment where diversity initiatives are no longer needed because the company will have created a culture that is guided by respect and admiration for individual differences.

Sandy Bishop
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